

What Does the Bible Teach About Unborn Children?

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake)

Introduction:

- A. Legal and ethical do not mean moral; often what is legal in civil government is evil in God's word, and what is considered culturally ethical is Biblically unrighteous.
 - 1. In the question of what does the Bible teach about unborn children, the following sources are irrelevant:
 - a. What the Supreme Court of the United States has to say about abortion,
 - b. What presidents and governors say about abortion,
 - c. What university professors, medical doctors, hospital ethics boards, or contemporary media say about abortion.
 - 2. We are not attempting to convince these authorities to change their opinions and rulings. That would be a pointless exercise
 - 3. We are addressing persons who profess to be believers and followers of God to respect what His words says about protecting all lives, especially the vulnerable lives of children before birth.
- B. How many lives are under consideration?
 - 1. Over 41,000,000 babies have been aborted thus far in 2020.
 - a. That's 116,810 per day; 4,867 per hour; 81 per minute; that's more than one every second of the day.
 - b. By way of comparison, 41,000,000 children killed by abortion, and there were 1,650,000 COVID 19 deaths worldwide. For every person who died from COVID, 25 babies died because their mothers didn't want them, and their doctors had no morals.
 - c. War with Iraq and Afghanistan (2003 - 2011) 6,713 deaths of American soldiers; war against children in abortion clinics in the same period - 10,634,120
 - 2. The world we live in -- Rom. 1:28-31 - "Without natural affection"
 - a. "Astorgon, a negative derivative of stergo (to cherish affectionately); hard-hearted towards kindred, without natural affection" (Strongs - 794)

I. WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH ABOUT PEOPLE WHO DO NOT PROTECT CHILDREN?

- A. When Judah was in steep moral degeneration, they began to sacrifice their children (including infants) to the god Molech - Jer. 19:3-7
- B. Herod killed infants to avoid the risk of loss of power and unsettling the region, thus incurring the wrath of Rome - Matt 2:16-18
- C. Pharaoh ordered the deaths of newborns to avoid the risk of Israel threatening the security of his nation - Ex. 1:15-17
- D. Adolph Hitler is excoriated in history, and rightly so, for sponsoring Dr. Josef Mengele to practice eugenics, experimenting on unborn children.

- E. But we live in a world that kills unborn children, not in worship of their gods or to avoid war, or to maintain national security; but because the children are an inconvenience.
 - 1. In all five cases, what they did was legal, but certainly not moral.
 - 2. In future, more enlightened times, will our descendants look back on us and our fig leaf of Roe Vs. Wade the same way we look at Herod, Pharaoh, and Hitler?
- F. The question is not what is legally and ethically acceptable at any given time in history; the questions that must be asked are:
 - 1. What has God said about the sanctity of human life?
 - 2. What has God said about parents who kill their children?
 - 3. What has God said about a nation that does not protect the innocent?
- G. We could spend hours looking at photos of aborted babies and spend a great deal of time discussing this from a medical perspective, trying vainly to determine when life begins. However, we are not doctors, and therefore not qualified to render an informed medical opinion.
 - 1. We could spend days discussing this issue from a psychological perspective, weighing the questions of the burden of a child for a woman or family unprepared to care for it vs. the long term burden of guilt felt by many who have abortions. Yet, few of us are psychologists, and thus not qualified to speak intelligently about this.
 - 2. We could discuss this from an economic viewpoint considering the burden to society of more children than can be cared for by the community vs. the potential loss of a future Mozart or Einstein or Da Vinci. But we are not economists, and I feel pretty confident that we are not prophets.
 - 3. The weaknesses in each of these discussions is that they are not relevant to the matter. Ending an innocent life is murder, a willful sin that is not subject to or justified by the motive.
 - 4. Since it is an unjustifiable murder, it cannot be mitigated by medical questions, psychological impacts, economic concerns, or any other lesser matter. It is and has always been a sin, and will never be otherwise, regardless of how it is viewed culturally.

II. WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH ABOUT UNBORN CHILDREN?

- A. Bible terms for life: note that nowhere does the Bible use contemporary ambiguous language that allows room for varied opinions.
 - 1. It does not use words like human or human being that can be semantically and connotatively adjusted to make an argument
 - 2. It uses man, woman, child, son, daughter, baby, child, etc.
 - 3. These are definitive terms that are not unclear
 - 4. The Bible makes no distinction of any kind in the terms used to describe an unborn child as a fetus rather than a child.
- B. Consider the clarity of the Bible terms:
 - 1. "Body without the spirit is dead" - James 2:26

- a. Regardless of its size, an unborn child has a body that is alive in its environment; therefore, the unborn child has a spirit.
- 2. "The blood is the life" - Deut. 12:23
 - a. An unborn child has a bloodstream regardless of its size or stage of development.
- 3. "Begot sons and daughters" - Gen. 5:3-4, 21, et al
 - a. "Begot" always refers to fertilization and the resultant conception
- 4. Children and sons in the womb - Gen. 25:21-22; 2Kings 19:3
 - a. They are not called fetuses, blobs of tissue, or embryos; they are called children
- 5. "A man child is conceived" - Job 3:3
 - a. Note the contrast between his day of birth and his night of conception; on both occasions he is a child with identity
 - b. Rev. 12:4-5 - Called "her child" before he is born
- 6. Called mothers before their children are born - Luke 1:43; Num. 12:12
- 7. "Baby leapt for joy in mother's womb" - Luke 1:41, 44
- 8. Luke 1:36 - Elizabeth conceived a son; he is called a son in the sixth month of her pregnancy
 - a. Luke 1:57 - Elizabeth brought forth a son; there is no difference in the terms used for the unborn and born son
 - b. By the way, three of these passages that speak of the unborn as children were written by Luke, a doctor.
- 9. Causing premature birth: "Life for life" - Ex. 21:22-23
- 10. Mary was found with "child" - Matt. 1:18
- 11. Children, peoples, nations, twins, not fetuses, embryos, or blobs of tissue - Gen. 25:20-24
- 12. God gave David identity before he was born - Psalm 139:13-16
- 13. God gave Jeremiah identity and purpose before he was born - Jer. 1:5
 - a. Who has the authority to void the purposes of God?
- C. Consider the clarity of Bible reasoning
 - 1. God created humankind in His image - Gen. 1:26-27
 - a. He originally did so by miracle
 - b. He then ordained that more human beings created in His image would be generated by the reproductive process, which He blessed and sanctified for this purpose
 - c. Gen. 1:28; Matt. 19:3-4; Heb. 13:4
 - d. One who ends a life created in the image of God by the means He ordained that life would be reproduced defies God and the image in which he or she was created.
 - 2. Gen. 9:6 - Killing a human being is different than killing an animal or removing cancerous or gangrenous tissue.
 - a. Note first that God's reason for the punishment of those who kill human beings is that they are created in His image
 - b. Note also that there is no limiter on the age or development of the human being killed in the text

c. Humankind is God's special creation that He carefully watches and attends to - Psalm 8:3-6

d. "Proponents of abortion argue that the taking of preborn lives is not murder since the unborn do not measure up to their definition of a person. They advocate that a person is one with good mental and physical health and the ability to socialize. It is obvious that an unborn child does not measure up to such a definition, since it cannot contribute anything to society. One must wonder at such a definition just how many other people do not qualify as a "person." Is one with diseases such as Alzheimer's a "person?" Is one in a coma or a quadriplegic a "person?" Is one with Downs Syndrome a "person?" Jesus cared not only for those who were productive, healthy citizens; He also cared for those who were only potentially capable." (Phil Sanders)

3. The Scriptures treat infants and children as blessings and gifts from the Lord - Psalm 127:3; Gen. 4:1

a. We should worry about a society that allows harm to come to the innocent with impunity. At a National Prayer Breakfast, Mother Teresa rebuked our President and the nation, when she said, "The greatest destroyer of peace today is abortion, because it is a war against the child, a direct killing of the innocent child, murder by the mother herself. And if we accept that a mother can kill even her own child, how can we tell other people not to kill one another? By abortion the mother does not learn to love, but kills even her own child to solve her problems. And, by abortion, the father is told that he does not have to take any responsibility at all for the child he has brought into the world... So abortion just leads to more abortion. Any country that accepts abortion is not teaching its people to love, but to use any violence to get what they want."

b. God hates those who harm the innocent - Prov. 6:16-19

b. Jesus loved little children. When others rebuked them as bothersome, Jesus took time to pray for them and bless them

c. Matt. 19:13-15; Luke 18:15-17; Matt. 18:2-4

Conclusion:

A. Our world can call it whatever they wish: abortion, removing unwanted tissue, terminating a pregnancy, pro-choice -- it is still murder of a child.

1. Abraham Lincoln offered an illustration: "How many legs does a horse have?" It has four legs. "What if you call the tail a leg, how many legs does it have?" Five? "No, it still only has four legs, you can call the tail anything you want, the horse only has four legs."

2. Call abortion what you like - God calls it murder.

B. Remember:

1. It is not a question of what is legally correct or socially acceptable; it is a matter of what God has defined as morally right.

2. We are not going to convince a world that is fully reprobate and hardened beyond the reach of the truth; our task is to teach those who profess to believe and follow God that His word forbids harm to unborn children.

The Ancients Rejected Any Practice That Caused Harm To The Unborn

- 170-215 AD Mark Felix "There are some women among you who by drinking special potions extinguish the life of the future human in their very bowels, thus committing murder before they even give birth." (Mark Felix, Christian Lawyer, Octavius chap. 30)
- 150 AD Didache "The second command of the Teaching:...do not murder a child by abortion or kill a newborn infant." (Didache ch.2,vs.2)
- 150-190 AD Athenagoras, a Christian apologist who wrote around 170 A.D: "When we say that those women who use drugs to bring on abortion actually commit murder and will have to render an account to God for this, how could we possibly murder [infants]? It would not make sense for us to regard the very fetus in the womb as a created being, and therefore an object of God's care, and then when it is born to kill it." (Athenagoras Embassy chap. 5)
- 150-190 AD Athenagoras, "What reason would we have to commit murder when we say that women who induce abortions are murderers, and will have to give account of it to God? For the same person would not regard the fetus in the womb as a living thing and therefore an object of God's care, and at the same time slay it, once it had come to life." (Athenagoras Plea (A.D. 176-177; ch.35)
- 140-230 AD Tertullian explained to the Romans, "In our case, since murder is absolutely forbidden in any form, we may not destroy even the fetus in the womb.... To hinder a birth is merely a speedier form of killing. It matters not whether you take away a life that is born. or destroy one that has not yet come to birth." (Tertullian Apology ch. 9)
- Diognetus (a likely reference to both exposure of infants to die and abortion): "(Christians) marry, like everyone else, and they beget children, but they do not cast out their offspring." (Letter of Diognetus (late 2nd or 3rd century; ch.5, vs.6)